



# Department of Justice

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District of North Dakota

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**Employees and Officers from the Spirit Lake Tribe Indicted on  
Embezzlement and Theft from an Indian Tribal Organization**

**GRAND FORKS** - United States Attorney Timothy Q. Purdon announced that on March 31, 2011, several Spirit Lake Tribe officers and employees were indicted by a federal grand jury and charged in three separate cases with embezzlement and theft from an Indian tribal organization and false statements.

**Justin Yankton**, 37, an officer of the Spirit Lake Tribe, and **Brooke Lynette Black**, 28, an employee with the Food Distribution Program, have been charged with embezzlement and theft from an Indian tribal organization. The indictment alleges that Yankton and Black knowingly and willfully misapplied funds belonging to the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program on the Spirit Lake Indian Reservation. The indictment also charges Black with false statement and alleges that Black gave false information to the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, on the Spirit Lake Indian Reservation, in order to receive fuel assistance. Yankton and Black are both from Fort Totten, ND. These incidents are alleged to have occurred from October 2008 and continued to the date of this indictment.

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Yankton made his initial appearance and was arraigned before United States District Court Magistrate Judge Alice R. Senechal on April 8, 2011, in Grand Forks, ND, and pleaded not guilty to embezzlement and theft from an Indian tribal organization. Black made her first appearance before United States District Court Magistrate Judge Alice R. Senechal on April 5, 2011, in Grand Forks, ND. Her arraignment is scheduled for April 18, 2011, in United States District Court in Grand Forks, ND.

**Patricia Robertson, a/ka Patti Cavanaugh**, 52, from St. Michael, ND, made her initial appearance before United States District Court Magistrate Judge Alice R. Senechal on April 5, 2011, in Grand Forks, ND, on a charge of embezzlement and theft from an Indian tribal organization. The indictment alleges that Robertson, coordinator for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program for the Spirit Lake Tribe, knowingly and willfully misapplied funds belonging to the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program on the Spirit Lake Indian Reservation. These incidents are alleged to have occurred from October 2007 and continued to the date of this indictment. Robertson's arraignment is scheduled for April 18, 2011, in United States District Court in Grand Forks, ND.

**Carl Walking Eagle**, 69, an officer of the Spirit Lake Tribe, and his wife **Barbara Walking Eagle**, 64, a librarian at the community college in Fort Totten, ND, have been charged with embezzlement and theft from an Indian tribal organization. The indictment alleges that Carl Walking Eagle and Barbara Walking Eagle, knowingly and

willfully misapplied funds belonging to the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program on the Spirit Lake Indian Reservation. The indictment also charges Barbara Walking Eagle with false statements and alleges that Barbara Walking Eagle gave false information to the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, on the Spirit Lake Indian Reservation, in order to receive fuel assistance. These incidents are alleged to have occurred from October 2008 and continued to the date of this indictment.

Carl Walking Eagle made his initial appearance before United States District Court Magistrate Judge Alice R. Senechal on April 8, 2011, in Grand Forks, ND. Carl Walking Eagle's arraignment is scheduled for April 18, 2011, in United States District Court in Grand Forks, ND. Barbara Walking Eagle made her first appearance and was arraigned on April 5, 2011, in Grand Forks, ND, before United States District Court Magistrate Judge Alice R. Senechal. Barbara Walking Eagle pleaded not guilty to the charges.

Purdon stressed that an indictment is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The statutory maximum sentence for embezzlement and theft from an Indian tribal organization and false statements is five years' imprisonment each.

These cases are being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Assistant United States Attorney Janice M. Morley is prosecuting these cases.